

NSC BRIEFING

31 July 1957

REBELLION IN OMAN

- I. A second series of air strikes against rebel forts in interior Oman began on 29 July while small-scale movements of British-led native troops have been undertaken to contain the area of the rebellion.
 - A. The RAF based at Sharja and Bahrein now has the mission of interdicting rebel "military movements" during daylight hours.
 1. There is no indication that air action has inflicted losses on Omani Liberation Army, which remains capable of intimidating sheikhs whose support of the revolt might be waning.
 - B. Meanwhile, the sultan has moved a 200-man British-led force from the coast inland to Ibri. The British-officered 800-man Trucial Oman Scouts has been concentrated at the strategic Buraimi Oasis, from which it has sent a detachment to reinforce the sultan's force at Ibri.
 - C. The British assembled two companies of Cameron Highlanders at Sharja, and have moved one of these to Buraimi.
 - D. The British have also established sea and ground patrols in an attempt to prevent supply of the rebels.
- II. British Prime Minister MacMillan told Ambassador Whitney that he is determined not to let the problem get out of hand and not to employ British troops.
 - A. British view revolt as outbreak of long-standing political tension between lowland and highland tribes.

State Department review completed

B. The British Foreign Office's Middle East chief has expressed a "reasonable hope" that the RAF action would bring the tribal leaders back to support the sultan.

III. King Saud in first reference to Omani uprising informed Ambassador Wadsworth that arms had been delivered to the rebels by Indian Government as a result of agreement between Nasr and Nehru, concluded through Krishna Menon.

A. While India has previously sold Egypt arms, which have been used in foreign clandestine operations, active Indian connivance in the Omani revolt is questionable.

B. However, Saudi and Egyptian training and equipment of Omani army well established.

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